11. THE MOVEMENT AND THE OPPOSITION

It may be of interest to collect in this place a few dicta of Hitler on the National Socialist Movement and its achievement.

In his speech at a Führertagung in Berlin on 14 June 1933 Hitler said: "The law of the National Socialist Revolution has not yet run its course. Its dynamic force *(Dynamik)* still dominates today the development in Germany, a development which presses forward irresistibly to a complete remodeling of German life. The greatest possible encouragement of the forces of our people's life *(Volkstums)* must always and everywhere be our starting-point and that must determine the direction of our action.... The new Germany which is sustained by this Movement can no longer be shaken by any power if only National Socialists remain what they are, what they have been in the past, and if only they remain always conscious of the source of their strength — the National Socialist Party."

In a speech at Munich on 22 April 1933 Hitler said: "It is not the lukewarm and those who are neutral who make history but the men who accept battle. Because our Movement has marched and still marches at the double it has in itself the strength to prevail against the foe and to win the victory. The Movement has taken over two thousand years of German civilization and German history: it will be the support of the German civilization and German history of the future. It will see to it that new imperishable monuments *(Dokamente)* shall be created which will place Germany for the future amongst the great civilized peoples of world-history. We labor not for the Movement but for the millennia."

In an interview with Mr. Vernon Bartlett in June 1934 Hitler said: "At the risk of appearing to talk nonsense I will tell you that this Movement will go on for a thousand years. The people are more behind me today than they were a year ago. They follow me wherever I go and they will continue to do so. We are not the sort of men to capitulate before any difficulties. We are all self-made men who have grown strong in the struggle."

In the Proclamation read at the Nuremberg Parteitag of 1934 Hitler said: "When the National Socialist Party, filled with fiery faith in a *Weltanschauung,* began its fight for Germany, in the very nature of such an undertaking it could not be but that faith sent more recruits than abstract knowledge — a knowledge often wise only in its own conceit. With the faith and the ardor of these unspoiled, unperverted men it was possible to change the whole axis of a States — but not otherwise."

In a speech to the officials of the Party delivered in Berlin on 18 July 1933 he said: "We have conquered the country through fighting; we must now cultivate it through peace."

In a speech to the Old Fighters in the Lustgarten, Berlin, on 30 January 1936 he said: "We all know what makes us strong. It was no mechanical organization, it was no external confession of the lips, but it was the strength which lies in the idea of our Movement, that strength which has won over thousands and hundreds of thousands of hearts. Some call it understanding *(Verstand),* others call it instinct; we call it faith, trust, confidence. We know that the National Socialist is not born; he must be trained, he must educate himself."

"What we have achieved is stupendous. Never in German history within the space of three years has anything approaching it been realized. I believe that men will have to take decades and perhaps centuries to find results of such a revolutionary character as have been accomplished in these first three years of the National Socialist Government."

"Because we could make sacrifices, because we wished to bring sacrifices — that is the reason why this Germany of ours has come.... The future will continue to demand sacrifices.... National Socialism is no doctrine of indolence, but a doctrine of battle: no doctrine of luck and chance, but a doctrine of work and effort, and thus also a doctrine of sacrifice. That was our view before the battle: in these last three years it has not altered, and in the future so it will remain."

"One thing only is decisive: for millennia our people has had to make sacrifices for its life's way, for its life battle. Nothing has it received as a gift: all too often its sacrifices have been to no purpose. But today the Movement can give the guarantee to the German people: The sacrifices which you, the German people, make will no longer be in vain: but from these sacrifices you will ever win for yourselves a new life."

In the Proclamation read at the Nuremberg Parteitag of September 1934 Hitler said:

"The will of the leadership of the National Socialist State cannot be diverted from its purpose, it cannot be shaken. It knows what it wills and it wills what it knows.

"That leadership has a right to put this value upon itself for it has behind it for verification such evidence as only very seldom can find its parallel in history. For the leadership of the Reich of today is the leadership of the National Socialist Party."

"And what this leadership has achieved in the short space of fifteen years the children of later generations will be taught to call 'The German Miracle'.... Thus the form of Germany's life has been determined for the next thousand years."

To this may be added some representative passages giving Hitler's view of the Opposition:

In his Proclamation to the Nuremberg Parteitag of 1934 Hitler said:

"Today we see before us a small band of folk who stand aside from our victorious march, a band of renegades or people whom we did not want. To call them 'the Opposition' hits the mark: it is the only true characterization of their miserable existence. We, too, formerly were in opposition, but we were the National Socialist Party and our faith was our Programme. But these folk are just an Opposition and no more: they have neither faith nor programme. They are, beginning from the eternal Ahasuerus of humanity down to the last uprooted anarchist, a Fronde of destructive elements or simple fools Chose sole common profession of faith is their 'No' launched against the community of the nation and against constructive work."

"And even these last remnants of a *Weltanschauung* opposed to the National Socialist outlook and the National Socialist State will be scattered by our next attack. The truth of our idea, the strength of our achievement, the resolution of our will shall win all that is German of them, all that can therefore be won to our side."

"The remainder will be as unimportant for the future of the German nation as the normal sum of criminality must be insignificant in its influence on human society."

In his speech at the annual harvest celebration on the Bückeberg on 30 September 1934 Hitler said:
"Much would go better in Germany, much would be easier, if those whose interest it was to see Germany weak and disunited would cease to hinder in every possible way the revival of the nation. Since the wish is father to the thought, they reveal to us the picture of their innermost purposes and hopes. Before 30 January *1933* they were quite certain that the National Socialist Movement would never gain power in Germany. A statement which today is found only in *émigré* newspapers one could oneself at that time read in almost every paper which was not National Socialist. National Socialism, it ran, is dead! At that time they were hoping that the Party would break up, that the leaders would quarrel, and that the struggle for power would thus end in failure. Things happened quite differently. But I had not been three days in the Wilhelmstrasse when someone had already fixed the life of the National Socialist regime at four weeks, while those who were specially generous added another fortnight. On 5 March the German people gave us a majority by 172 million votes. Next, we were assured that the failure to combat unemployment would turn the masses against the new Government within four to five months at most. Unemployment receded. The messes streamed into the German Labor Front. The Movement completed its victory in Germany. In a few weeks it swept away one party after another. What had once seemed hardly possible had become a reality: the German nation had found its way to the community of the people. The next period fixed for our downfall was the winter. Hungry mobs would invade the streets and would destroy the National Socialist

Government in bloody fighting: so hoped the *émigrés* in Prague, in Saarbrücken, Paris, and elsewhere. But the German people expressed its complete confidence in us. The masses elected a 90 per cent. National Socialist Reichstag. As for hunger, we met it with the Winter Help campaign. And the revolt — did not come off. Next came fresh hopes, and with them always fresh dates for our downfall. Crises in foreign relations were to upset our Government. They have served only to strengthen it! Difficulties with foreign exchange and raw materials furnished the next motive for prophesying our ruin. Yet these will never force us into surrender; at the worst, they will make us even more independent than we are now! Then they wrote, the SA. is on the point of revolution. Once more they hoped for the collapse of Germany, and I think they are richer by one more disillusionment, A few mad criminals have met their end, but the Party in every one of its organizations, including the SA., has only become firmer and stronger still."

"Their next hope was connected with the illness of the venerable President of the Reich. Suddenly their inner feelings broke through all the bounds of reason and good sense. Germany would dissolve into chaos.

The individual leaders of the National Socialist Movement, and so of the Reich, were, it was said, already fiercely struggling between and against each other. Every possible development in Germany, in all its variations, was ventilated, ranging from monarchism to Bolshevism — and when the day for decision came, we settled the matter in twenty minutes. National Socialist Germany stands today firmer than ever before, and 19 August was the best and clearest confirmation of this fact. But you must understand, for all that, my fellow countrymen, that it is no easy task to lead the struggle for the restoration of a broken people and of a ruined economy, when we are opposed by so many interests set on our downfall. There is therefore all the more reason for them to admit that the success which we have achieved in their despite is only to be the more highly valued.

In an interview with Pierre Huss of the Hearst Press Hitler was asked whether the Social Democrats and the Communists of the Saar who had voted for Germany would have any difficulties to fear on account of their former attitude; he replied: "Do you think that the nearly 39 millions of my supporters in Germany did not previously belong to any party? They have been gradually and with much labor won over to the National Socialist idea.... We never ask what the individual man has been, only what he wishes to be today.... In our community of the people former Communists and adherents of the Centrum today join in a common fight for the National Socialist State."

In his Proclamation to the German people of 30 January 1935 Hitler said: "The overwhelming majority of all our former opponents have in their inmost hearts long ago repented. What we always hoped for has come about. When they subjected our intentions and our work to a just examination they found in the end that after all what they had longed for had been realized in and through us — a Germany of honor, of freedom, and of social happiness."

In his speech in Berlin on 30 January 1936 (the third anniversary of the assumption of power by the National Socialist Government) Hitler said:

"When 30 January came, we did not assume power in order under the shelter of this power to win the people: we were then already in possession of the German people. The sound core of the German people stood on that day already in our ranks. By that day the best of the German people had already fixed its choice on us. Only small-minded doubters or those without any understanding — it was these who still stood aloof. But even in these ranks by now deep breaches have been made. For that which stands against us today does not stand against us because we are National Socialists, but because we have once more made Germany free and strong. They are the enemies of our people in our own land; we know them from the time of the Great War, from the time of the melancholy revolts of the year 1918; we know them from the time of our worst collapse. They alone it is who not only do not wish to find the way to us, but who will never be able to find it in the future and them we ourselves renounce.... Germany will not see again a November 1918: everyone can give up the hope of being able once more to turn back this wheel of world-history."

Speaking at Gera on I7 June 1934 Hitler said:

"We have not the feeling that we are an inferior race, a worthless rabble on the face of the world, which may or can be trampled on by everyone. No, we have the feeling that we are a great people, a people which forgot itself only once; a people which, led astray by senseless fools, itself destroyed its own strength, but which has now awaken once more from this nightmare of madness. No one shall imagine that this people during the next thousand years can again sink into such a nightmare existence. This lesson, which eve have learnt in so sinister a fashion, will be an historical warning to us for thousands of years. What happened once through our own fault will not be repeated a second time in the life of the German people!"

"Always I have only one request, one word of advice, my fellow-countrymen: look at the strength of our people which lies in our inner unity of will, in our unity of spirit, and in our community of thought. Convince yourselves that strength finds its expression not so much in army corps, in tanks and heavy guns, but rather ultimately expresses itself in the common working of a people's will. Let yourselves, further, be penetrated with the conviction that men must be taught this community of feeling, and that safeguards for this purpose must therefore be created. You must see in our National Socialist Movement a mighty safeguard of this kind against the spirit of class warfare, of class hatred, and of class division. You must see in the National Socialist Movement and its organizations a great school of education towards a life in common. Cling fast to this Movement, fight for it, and you will then be fighting for the German people and the German Reich. For one thing is certain, the fate of the community of the German people is bound up with the existence of this Movement, and the fate of the German Reich is dependent on the strengthening of the community of the German people. We all know that we are not an end in ourselves, but the Party, the SA. and SS., the PO, the Labor Service, the Youth Organization, all are means to an end; that end is the inner welding together of the body of our people; and thus will be developed those capacities for work, now latent in our people, which shall truly advance the interests of peace, civilization, and material prosperity.... If in the course of eight years, in this town, starting with but a handful of men, this victory could be obtained, then in the years and decades that are to come this victory will strike deeper, and all those little pygmies, who imagine that they can say something against it will be swept away by the might of this common idea of ours. For whatever criticism these pygmies choose to make, there is one thing that they all forget: where is that better state of things to be found which could replace the present? Where have they got anything which they could put in its stead? It is laughable when such a little worm tries to struggle against so mighty a renewal of a whole people. It is laughable when such a little pygmy imagines he can stop with a few phrases the gigantic renewal of the people's life. If these insignificant carping critics were to have their way, Germany would fall to pieces again, as she fell before. But we can assure them of this; they had not the power formerly to hinder the rise of National Socialism, and now that the people is awake, never again will they plunge it into sleep."

With this attack on the critics of the Movement may be compared a passage from an address to the Ortsgruppe of Rosenheim delivered on 11 August 1935 (on the 15th anniversary of its foundation: Hitler had first spoken there on 2 May 1920) in which Hitler said that he had fought a fight for the heart and soul of the German people more wonderful than any fight before. "The destiny of this *Ortsgruppe," he continued,* "must be a lesson for us all. Destiny at that time [1920] had no gifts to offer the Old Guard in this city. A small band of men they were, facing an overwhelming mass of doubters and mockers. It was one against ten at that time, and we did not grow weary in the fight till success was achieved. Today there are nine in the whole German Reich against every one of the little doubters. If we did not surrender then we shall certainly not do so today. By fighting we once won the whole German Reich, and by fighting shall we maintain and preserve it. Those who stand against us should be under no illusions! We have never avoided a fight in the past: we do not avoid it today. If they want a fight, they can have one. We shall crush them so utterly that for the next fifteen years they will lose any thought of renewing this fight."

REICHSTAG FIRE

In a speech at Breslau on 1 March 1933 Hitler said:

"If today any power should think that through an appeal to terrorism it can bend us then that power forgets the character of this Movement. Today the Movement has become Germany and Germany will live. He who raises himself against this life of the nation he will meet our resolution and on this resolution he will be dashed in pieces whoever he be."

In an interview with Mr. D. Sefton Delmer, the correspondent of the Daily Express, *Hitler replied to the suggestion that the Reichstag Fire "was nothing but a put-up job designed to give Hitler the pretext of waging a merciless war against the Communists and Socialists":* "It is nothing but a damned lie and a malicious libel. As base as it is ridiculous."

"Of course, there is one way in which I could settle these reports once and for all. I could have the Communist who was caught hanged from the nearest tree. That would dispose for ever of this vile insinuation that he is an agent of ours. But these lies are really too absurd even to discuss seriously. But I will tell you another thing. Europe, instead of suspecting me of false play, should be grateful to me for my drastic action against the Bolsheviks. If Germany went Communist, as there was every danger of her doing until I became Chancellor, it would not have been long before the rest of civilized Europe fell a prey to this Asiatic pest."

"The onslaught on the Reichstag was just one of a whole series of terrorist atrocities which the police are able to prove were planned by the Communists."

"The fire in the Berlin Royal Castle, which was only just discovered in time, was to have raised the curtain on an orgy of destruction."

"We have seized hundredweights of material in the secret cellar Of the Communist head-quarters, proving that these fires were to be the beacon signals for a nationwide campaign of dynamiting, incendiarism, and mass murder. Why, those Bolshevist criminals had even made preparations to poison the water reservoirs!"

"Suppose that there had been a similar situation in Britain. Suppose that the Communists had tried to set Buckingham Palace on fire, and had actually succeeded in setting on fire the House of Commons and gutting this national shrine! Your Government would have acted just as I have acted."

Mr. Delmer said: There are reports current both here in Germany and abroad that a great massacre of your political enemies is planned by your party — a new St. Bartholomew's Night they call it....

"My dear Delmer," *Hitler said, "I* need no St. Bartholomew's Night. By the decrees issued legally we have appointed tribunals which shall try legally enemies of the State and deal with them legally in a way which will put an end to the conspiracies."